



State of California—Health and Human Services Agency
Department of Health Services



ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER
Governor

June 14, 2006

TO: *CALIFORNIA NUTRITION NETWORK CONTRACTORS*

SUBJECT: PROGRAM LETTER 06-02
CONTRACTOR ROLE IN SCHOOL WELLNESS POLICY
IMPLEMENTATION AND WALK TO SCHOOL DAY

This Program Letter provides you with information about the role that Food Stamp Nutrition Education (FSNE) contractors may play in supporting or financing School Wellness Policy development and implementation required by Public Law 108-265, and implementation of Walk to School Day in your communities. This information is in addition to guidance provided in September 2005, and it is effective immediately.

On March 23, 2006, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) issued a memorandum of clarification explaining the Public Law and the scope of support that FSNE may provide to local Child Nutrition Programs. Upon further clarification from USDA Western Regional Office, we are pleased to advise you that FSNE contractors are now allowed to participate in, but not lead, school wellness committees or school health councils. USDA emphasizes the importance of FSNE being at the table during the school wellness policy discussions, when those discussions are relevant to the dynamic FSNE-funded nutrition education activities occurring through eligible schools across the state. While this guidance is effective immediately, it is not possible to amend existing contracts (budgets and scopes of work).

Additional policy clarification received in a March 23, 2006, memorandum to Food Stamp Program Directors states: "FSNE is intended for that segment of the community who are eligible for the Food Stamp Program (FSP)." While FSNE may pay for nutrition education directed to food stamp recipients and eligibles, it is not within its scope to pay for local initiatives that are directed to the entire community except for census tracts where half the residents have income at or below 185 percent of the federal poverty level. Such initiatives are the financial responsibility of the community. FSNE can only do its part, within the scope of FSP and the contracts executed by the State.

FSNE-funded staff may participate in school wellness policy meetings led by the State/local departments of education, if they are an existing provider of allowable nutrition education activities in low-income schools and need to represent that particular effort during the wellness policy discussions. Reasonable staff time/travel expenses for this purpose are allowable. As noted in the September 2005 Administrative Notice 05-28 from USDA, FNS, FSNE funds may be used to promote systems, environmental, or policy change, if and only if, such promotion is directly linked to, supportive of, and proportionate to allowable nutrition education efforts for FSNE eligible populations.

We recognize that this policy clarification may generate additional questions. Please contact your Program or Contract Manager directly for technical assistance regarding specific situations. We appreciate your patience and creativity in adapting project activities as policies are clarified. Thank you for your continued support and cooperation.

Walk to School Day Events

FSNE supports activities to encourage physical activity every day by promoting active living and connecting people with community-based resources and activities funded by appropriate agencies. The inclusion of physical activity promotion as part of FSNE is an allowable activity as long as the programming (workshops, conferences, trainings, classes, community events) focuses primarily on nutrition education (healthy eating behaviors).

With this in mind, FSNE-funds may be used to promote Walk to School Day events. Allowable FSNE activities for Walk to School Day may include (1) collaborating with school partners to promote Walk to School Day events, and/or (2) participating (but not leading) Walk to School events. Ideally, *Network*-funded staff should work with partners to ensure that nutrition education and nutrition-related activities are included in Walk to School events.

This year, Walk to School Day is on October 4, 2006. International Walk to School Week takes place the first week in October. Over 30 countries participate. The goals of Walk to School Day are to (1) encourage more children and parents to walk to school, and (2) promote active living by demonstrating how easy and enjoyable walking can be for families.

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More information and resources about Walk to School Day events can be found at
www.cawalktoschool.com.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Susan B. Foerster", followed by a horizontal line.

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and
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